federal register

Thursday
March 20, 1980

Part II

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Office of Human Development Services

Administration for Public Services; Cooperative Research and Demonstration Grant Priorities—Fiscal Year(s) 1980 and/or 1981

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Human Development Services

Administration for Public Services; Cooperative Research and Demonstration Grant Priorities—Fiscal Year(s) 1980 and/or 1981

AGENCY: Human Development Services, DHEW.

SUBJECT: Notice of proposed Fiscal Year(s) 1980 and/or 1981 Administration for Public Services (APS), Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation (RD&E) priorities.

SUMMARY: This notice presents the tentative research, demonstration and evaluation (RD&E) priorities that the Administration for Public Services proposes to initiate in Fiscal Year 1980 and/or 1981 depending on the availability of funds for carrying out Sections 1110 and 1115 of the Social Security Act as amended. This notice is being published with some estimated project funding levels in excess of available funds in order that the final RD&E priorities may be modified to incorporate and reflect the expertise of individuals knowledgeable in the field.

DATES: In order to be considered, comments must be *received* no later than May 5, 1980. Comments on these proposed priorities or suggestions for other priorities are invited. *No proposals, concept papers or other forms of application should be submitted at this time.*

ADDRESS: Comments must be sent to: Dr. David W. Fairweather, Director, Division of Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation, 330 C Street, S.W., Room 2412, Washington, DC 20201.

For further information, call Dr. David W. Fairweather at (202) 245-9200.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

Grants and cooperative agreements funded by APS are for research or demonstration projects which will add to existing knowledge and improvement of new methods and techniques for the planning, evaluation, management, delivery, and coordination of social services programs. Cooperative agreements are discussed in the **Federal Register** (44 FR 36350, published June 21, 1979).

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The thrust of the APS research and demonstration program is to support improvements of State and local governments' capability to furnish services directed at the following goals:

1. Achieving economic self-support and preventing, reducing, and eliminating dependency.
2. Achieving/maintaining self-sufficiency, including reduction of dependency.
3. Preventing/remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation and preserving/rehabilitating/reuniting families.
4. Reducing inappropriate institutionalization.
5. Securing appropriate institutionalation.

In order to achieve these goals, public knowledge is needed on several critical service issues. The following research and demonstration program objectives are intended to assist in obtaining this information:

1. To provide a sound basis for effective program operation by improving and promoting innovative policy development, management, information/reporting, service delivery and accountability of the title XX program.
2. To promote quality service by improving the capability of State title XX and provider agency staff.

Proposed Priority Projects

In June 1979, the APS Commissioner invited suggestions and comments from Regional staff, State and local agencies, and organizations interested in the title XX program regarding the nature of RD&E projects that should be undertaken during FY 1980 and FY 1981. The following table indicates the response which was received:

TABLE 1

Respondents	Number of suggested project areas
Federal agencies	26
State and local government agencies	68
Other organizations	14

These responses have been incorporated in the APS proposed project priorities as appropriate. The criteria used to judge whether these suggestions should be included were as follows:

That the projects (a) did not duplicate existing research, demonstration or evaluation efforts; (b) would contribute to the state-of-the-art in the proposed subject area; and (c) would facilitate APS policy, program and legislative decision making by providing information which would otherwise be unavailable.

The priority projects are identified by a number in parenthesis after each project. *The appropriate number must be used on all comments and correspondence which relate to the project.*

Title XX Waiver Demonstration Projects of National Significance (APS-80/81-1)

Purpose

The purpose of this project area is to encourage State agencies to utilize the Section 1115 waiver authority of the Social Security Act to undertake demonstrations where potential findings/outcomes could have national significance (that is, be significant enough to warrant replication or transfer among States or local agencies, or result in a regulation or statutory change).

These demonstrations may involve waivers of the requirements of Section 2002, 2003, and 2004 of Title XX of the Social Security Act as amended, or incur costs not otherwise allowable as expenditures under Section 2002, in order that innovative approaches to planning, eligibility determination, service delivery, fiscal accountability, training, and management and related Federal policy decisions can be considered and made regarding regulation changes and new legislation. These demonstrations could include:

1. Allowing title XX training costs for provider staff not directly related to the provision of services or determination of eligibility (e.g., bookkeepers and accountants);
2. Allowing emergency shelter as a protective service to a child for periods in excess of thirty days in any six month period; and
3. Allowing for changes in eligibility determination and redetermination time frames.

However, States must focus on, and convincingly discuss, specific changes in the law or regulations which would enhance State or local title XX program development and operations.

Approach

The approach to be employed will involve (by statute) a State agency demonstration of the impact of title XX waivers on State, county or local programs and clients. This will involve pre-demonstration and post-demonstration comparisons and a mandatory evaluation component. The evaluations are expected to show what outcomes are achieved in relation to State's title XX programs and their clients. A rationale will be required of the State applicant(s) as to why the project outcomes could be of national significance. The APS review of State applications will include analysis from the programmatic and RD&E

perspectives as to the potential contribution to the title XX program and acceptability of the demonstration design.

Expected Findings

Defined improvements in State programs and in the services provided to clients which are achieved through Section 1115 waiver demonstration projects.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately two projects will be funded for total project periods of three years each. The initial award will be funded at a level of up to $200,000 each. The second and third year continuation awards will each be funded at a level of up to $150,000 and $100,000, respectively.

Initiatives With Substantial Regional Office Involvement and Priority (APS-80/81-3)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to encourage State and local agencies to focus on local issues that impact geographical segments of the country rather than the nation. These issues may overlap State boundaries and, perhaps, even the APS Regional Office boundaries. These projects may relate to policy, service delivery, management issues, or technology transfer. This poject will provide funding for important project with less than nationwide interest.

Approach

The approach is to be developed by the applicants depending on the nature of the project.

Expected Findings

These projects are intended to provide useful approaches to important local issues. To the extent that issues can be first addressed on a regional basis, we expect to be able to avoid national problems.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately four projects will be funded for total project periods of 12 months each. The awards will be funded at a level up to $50,000 each.

Policy Research and Evaluation of Title XX Regulations (APS-80/81-4)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to identify, through the systematic analysis of the title XX regulations, areas which lend themselves to study via the R&D process. During the course of a program year various policy issues arise throught the passage of legislation or the writing of regulations. As a result, gaps are created between what is currently being done via the R&D process and what needs to be done.

An efficient R&D program must have some mechanism that will enable it to respond to the knowledge gaps created by such factors as the passage of new legislation or the writing of new regulations. For example, the passage of new legislation may create an unintended barrier to the provision of services to a particular population. Through a combination of policy analysis and evaluation of the regulations, such occurrences cannot only be identified but can be illustrated (and solutions tested) via the R&D process.

Approach

Public comment is invited on regulatory provisions which should be studied and appropriate methods of study. The approach to be employed should explore the policy and programmatic impacts of selected issues identified. Using the information gathered from this announcement, APS will plan and conduct in-depth research, demonstration, or evaluation studies.

Development and Evaluation of Performance Standards in Relation to Program Goals (APS-80/81-5)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to stimulate States and local governments in the development and evaluation of performance standards for their own title XX service programs. This includes the identification of the essential elements of the given service, the relative priority/importance of these components, and a mechanism for identifying the appropriate intensity of the respective elements. Also, this project is meant to stimulate the collection of data to monitor performance, identify problems, address resource (re)allocation issues in terms of fixed budgets, and suggest policy changes that measurably improve performance.

Approach

The project will develop realistic, measurable program objectives and performance indicators for a minimum of five title XX service areas. For a given service area, the project will be expected to identify a minimum of ten essential components and related standards for the delivery of an effective, efficient, quality service of reasonable cost. A method for ranking the relative importance of each component will also be developed. The project will develop a data collection system to document achievement or failure of the delivery system to meet minimum standards in each component of the service area. This data system will be rquired to serve both management and direct service delivery staff with respect to feedback on performance. The project will suggest approaches to corrective action strategies in situations where performance is unacceptable.

Each phase of the project will be field tested with volunteer title XX government and provider agencies.

Expected findings

It is expected that this project will identify model measurable objectives and performance indicators which States can use ot improve their title XX programs.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately two awards will be made for total project periods of 18 months each. The awards will be funded at a level of up to $150,000 each.

Improving Adult Protective Services Programs (APS-81-2)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop model adult protective services programs which identify the needs of eligible clients; identify characteristics of clients in need of receiving care, or likely to be in need of receiving care; which develop mechanisms for carrying out guardianship responsibilities with respect to clients and their property; and which develop monitoring and review procedures to identify or recertify the appropriateness of a guardianship role.

Approach

One of the assumptions most frequently advanced by service providers in both the public and private sector is that we are seeing significantly increased numbers of adults with mental impairments which make it impossible for them to remain in the community without close supervision. Phase one of this project will be a study which will take a comprehensive look at the legal aspects of protective services for the elderly and will identify which of the legal approaches are utilized most frequently, e.g., guardianship including guardianship of the persons and guardianship of the estate; conservatorship; and commitment to an institution. Under what circumstances are each of these methods used, and which appears to be most beneficial to

the individual, his family, and the agency offering these services.

Phase two would involve the development and implementation of demonstrations in two or more localities to demonstrate:

1. How a County Welfare Department can make practical use of any one of the above methods, and to test the effectiveness (relative impact and effectiveness) of the approaches used; and

2. What is involved for a private, voluntary family service agency serving as a provider of title XX services, in utilizing any or all of the above methods (and testing their relative impact and effectiveness).

Expected Findings

The model developed within this project should be transferrable to both State and local human service agencies that deal with this population.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately one project will be awarded for a total project period of three years. The initial award and subsequent continuation awards will be funded at a level of up to $300,000.

Improving Management Practices and Technologies in Title XX Agencies (APS-81-4)

In 1976 the National Conference on Social Welfare's Task Force on Expanding Management Technology and Professional Accountability in Local Services Programs reaffirmed the very basic principle that "management is a vital and necessary function in the growing field of social welfare." The Task Force went on to state that given the continued growth of the field of social welfare and the need to deliver effective and efficient services to clients, innovative management practices and technologies need to be adopted. Interest in this area has continued at a high level, as evidenced by the concerns expressed in the Title XX—National Policy Symposium which took place in October 1978. Included in the Symposium's published report were a series of recommendations for action on management improvement.

The Federal Government was charged with the responsibility to:

- Encourage States to build management capacity in the areas of comprehensive social services planning, systematic program evaluation, and services information recording, retrieval, and analysis by setting aside from the existing title XX ceiling new Federal funds for these purposes.
- Assure at the Federal level that high-quality technical assistance, guidance, and activities designed to promote management technology transfer are available on an on-going basis, in order to build management capacity at State and local levels in the areas of planning, needs assessment, data analysis, program and financial reporting, performance standards development, service effectiveness measures, service impact and cost, service delivery standards, purchases of service contracting, and program monitoring and evaluation procedures.

This project is an attempt to deal with the concerns expressed above, as well as the recommendations on APS/HDS Regional Staff.

The purpose of this project is to continue to provide an opportunity for a State agency, or a non-profit organization by itself or in cooperation with a State agency, to: (a) identify critical areas for management (including, but not limited to, those identified in the Symposium's recommendations); (b) develop and demonstrate innovative approaches for bringing about improvements in selected areas; and (c) transfer the technology to other interested States.

Approach

As a first step, prospective applicants will be required to identify critical areas for management improvement and their rationale for selecting these areas. The areas selected for study and demonstration should be areas which have potential national significance such as model accounting systems, model procurement manuals, model personnel systems, and model agency audit guides. This project can be conducted in three major phases, as follows:

Phase I. Comprehensive State of the Art and Design of the Demonstration Project

The first phase of the project will include a comprehensive state-of-the-art, including but not limited to: (a) a description of the ways in which the selected technologies would improve the management of title XX agencies; (b) the appropriateness of the management methodologies used; and (c) the potential transferability of the technologies.

During this phase the recipient will also utilize the information gained from the state-of-the-art in designing a methodology for the demonstration phase of the project. The design will cover:

- The management objective to be achieved
- The approach/methodology to be employed
- The criteria for site selection
- The site(s) recommended for the demonstration (e.g., State office, district or regional office(s), county or city office)
- The plan for technical assistance if deemed necessary by the recipient (from what sources)
- The plan for data collection and analysis
- The products anticipated, including identification of intended users
- The plan for evaluation of the products of the project

Phase II. The Demonstration Phase

The recipient will carry out a demonstration in the selected site(s). The recipient will be expected to document: (1) the methods and procedures employed in implementing this demonstration; (2) any barriers or impediments encountered; and (3) cost avoidance data that result from project implementation.

Phase III. Technology Transfer Phase

The recipient will be expected to participate in the transfer of new management techniques to other sites outside the demonstration, including, but not limited to other States title XX agencies.

Expected Findings

It is expected that the project will produce innovative management technologies in selected areas that will result in increased program effectiveness, and efficiency, quality service, and improved client outcomes.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately one project will be funded for a total project period of three years. The initial award and subsequent continuation awards will be funded at a level of up to $200,000 each.

Building State Evaluation Capacity (APS-81-5)

Purpose

There is a clear-cut need to raise the skills and know-how of the staffs of State evaluation units, in order to raise the quality of evaluations being accomplished (in those States where evaluations are being undertaken) and to enable those States not currently undertaking evaluations to do so. In many States evaluative capabilities are still very rudimentary for technical as well as financial reasons. States perceive the inability to evaluate their programs as one of the major stumbling blocks to better programs and a barrier to effective planning for human services programs.

This project will provide Federal funds for several States to improve their

capabilities to conduct evaluation studies. Title XX now provides no separate funds for this purpose. State evaluations of title XX have been funded out of regular State allotments for services. Thus, States will be enabled to achieve greater accountability; efficiency and effectiveness of services will be enhanced; and States will be better able to allocate limited funds to the most effective services.

States will be given an opportunity to submit proposals for projects to develop and implement evaluations of the service process and/or service products. Technical assistance will be provided to the recipients in developing and carrying out their evaluations.

Approach

These projects will build on the work conducted in Illinois, Maine, and Arizona, and will set in place, by the end of the project period, an evaluation capability which can be maintained without continued project assistance. The applicants will submit proposals identifying: (1) the purposes of the evaluation activity; (2) the strategy to be used to achieve these purposes; (3) description of how the State's evaluation capability and the capability of the States will be improved by the project; (4) the type of evaluation study or studies to be conducted, and (5) potential utilization of the results. An independent evaluation of the project will be required.

Expected Findings

This undertaking is expected to produce evaluation methods and studies directly relevant to State title XX programs. Recipients will produce documentation, including utilization strategy for transfer of knowledge gained and procedures employed to other State agencies.

Number, Cost and Duration

Approximately five projects will be funded for a total project period of three years. The initial awards will be funded at a level of up to $200,000 each. The subsequent second year continuation awards will be funded at a level of up to $150,000 each. The third year continuation awards will be funded at a level of up to $100,000 each.

State Evaluations of Client Outcome (APS-81-6)

Purpose

This project is designed to improve the flow of systematic information to managers on what happens to the recipients of social services. Information on outcomes is an essential component of the data that should be avilable to program and policy decision makers. Service activity and cost data alone cannot provide sufficient information. They need to be examined in conjuction with outcome data in order to help identify problem areas where additional investment of resources or improvement of procedures is needed, to help identify effective programs and procedures, and to monitor outcome following program and policy changes. Due to the inherent difficulties in measuring social service outcomes, the state-of-the-art of outcome measurement has lagged behind that of cost and activity measurement. To help fill the gap, a small number of efforts have begun in recent years to test a number of different approaches aimed at the development of practical procedures that agencies could use to obtain feedback regularly about clients' condition after receiving services. Such procedures are aimed at providing social service agency managers and officials with regular (at least annual) client outcome information to aid them in making program and policy choices.

Currently we have a contractor identifying different approaches to client outcome monitoring (for potential use by State and local agencies), and to provide a preliminary discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each. A training manual is being developed on client outcome monitoring procedures covering the major procedures being used, and recommendations on future dissemination and research needs are being developed. Incentives will be provided to those States implementing the client outcome monitoring procedures. These incentives will be in the form of funds to aid in the implementation process.

Independent, third party evaluations will be conducted in those agencies utilizing the alternative approaches currently being developed to: (1) identify problem areas where additional investment or resources or improvement of technology is needed; (2) identify effective programs and procedures; (3) monitor outcomes following program and policy changes; and (4) reduce cost.

Approach

During the past several years the Administration for Public Services (APS) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) have funded several RD&E projects which have been directed to the area of outcome monitoring. The following are representative of these efforts:

a. *Monitoring the Outcomes of Social Services*—This work focuses on the outcomes (or end results) of services to be monitored by a State or local agency on a regular basis and on the procedures for collecting data on these outcomes. Such data, collected over a period of time, can indicate trends, progress and problems. Consequently, outcome information is an important aid to public officials and concerned citizens for finding out just what is being accomplished and for identifying areas that need more intensive examination.

b. *Measuring the Impact of Title XX on Clients*—It is the intent of this study to develop workable alternatives for State and local title XX agencies to use to measure the impact of social services on clients.

Title XX emphasizes State and local determination of the service needs of the various populations and how best to meet those needs. It is the basic hypothesis of this study that State and local managers and administrators will utilize and implement procedures and methodologies to measure impact when these procedures and methodologies are designed and developed in the context of what they perceive and identify as useful and relevant information. It is the hypothesis of APS that the evaluative data States will collect through the use of these methodologies will be more useful for Federal needs than information collected by States to meet Federally mandated requirements.

c. *Client Outcome Monitoring Procedures for State and Local Social Services Agencies*—This project will identify different approaches to client outcome monitoring (for potential use by State and local agencies), and provide a preliminary discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each. A training manual is being developed on client outcome monitoring procedures covering the major approaches, a series of regional workshops on client outcome monitoring procedures will be conducted and recommendations for future dissemination and research needs are being developed. This project will improve the flow of systematic information to managers on what happens to the clients of social services.

d. *Region V Evaluation Project*—This project was to develop a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of the social services funded under title XX and to assist States in expanding their evaluation capacities. The project recommended the following:

1. Focus on the impact of services on the lives of clients.

2. Use reliable and valid client functioning scales (the scale items to be

based on observable behavior, to the extent possible).

3. Apply measurement techniques before and after services are provided.

4. Collect data gathered by caseworkers or trained interviewers.

5. Obtain data collected from a representative sample of clients.

6. Cover the five legislative goals to title XX.

7. Apply generic scales, making them broad enough to be used across service categories.

8. Include client satisfaction measurement.

Approach

The approach to be employed is to encourage State and local agencies to implement one or more of the approaches to client-outcome monitoring. This will involved pre-implementation and post-implementation comparisons, indicating the changes and improvements in the flow of systematic information to managers on what happens to the clients of social services.

Expected Findings

This project is designed to produce evaluations for the States detailing the improvements of management and service delivery resulting from implementing client outcome monitoring procedures.

Number, Cost, and Duration

Approximately two projects will be awarded for a total project period of 18 months. The awards will be funded at a level of up to $150,000 each.

Common Evaluation of Title XX Waiver Projects of National Significance (APS-81-8)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to analyze previous title XX waiver projects as well as those currently being done to determine whether selected title XX regulations hamper agencies in providing quality services to clients in need and in carrying out efficient programs. Many of the problems, it is felt, are in the area of planning, eligibility determination, service delivery, fiscal accountability, training, management, and related Federal policy areas. This project will measure the impact of the waivers; evaluating the 1115 projects in terms of achievement of objectives of the project and client outcomes, and in terms of changes in services, operations, regulations, and statutes. Technical assistance will be made available to assist the State grantee(s) in overcoming problems identified in the evaluation and also assist the grantee(s) in implementing the project(s).

Approach

Public comment is invited on the appropriateness of examining the impact (policy and programmatic) of the title XX waivers on State programs and clients. This could involve pre-demonstration and post-demonstration comparisons and analysis of problems encountered by the demonstrations during the implementation process. These evaluations are expected to show what outcomes are achieved in relation to States' title XX programs and their clients and what process modifications are indicated. The project could also assist the recipient(s) to find acceptable solutions to problems identified in the evaluation, assist the recipient(s) to implement the project(s) and document the methods of providing TA, the problems and resolutions identified for dissemination to other potential recipient(s) and interested parties.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 13.647)

Dated: March 14, 1980.

Michio Suzuki,

Acting Commissioner for Public Services.

Approved: March 14, 1980.

Warren Master,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Human Development Services.

[FR Doc. 80-8569 Filed 3-19-80; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4110-92-M